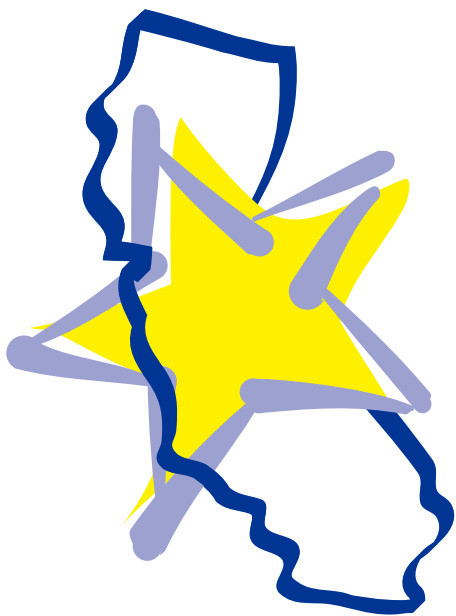


Reporting

2002 STAR Results

Press Briefing Packet—Part I



Overview of 2002 STAR Program

August 2002

**prepared by the
Standards and Assessment Division
California Department of Education**



Table of Contents

Part I

Key District Testing and Reporting Dates for STAR 2002	2
Internet Posting of 2002 STAR Test Results	3
Facts about the 2002 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program	4
Facts about the 2002 California Standards Tests	5
Reporting 2002 STAR Test Results Questions and Answers for the Media	7
Facts about the 2003 STAR Program: Questions and Answers for the Media	13
California Writing Standards Tests: Grades 4 and 7	15



Key District Testing and Reporting Dates for STAR 2002

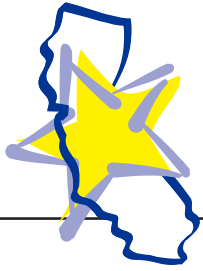
May 15	Last day for regular STAR testing for SABE/2
10 days after 85 percent of Instructional year for any school or track	Last day for regular and makeup testing for the California Standards Tests and the Stanford 9 administration
Within 5 days after district testing completed	Districts submit Certification of Compliance to California Department of Education (CDE)
Within 10 days after district testing completed	Districts submit school-by-school Enrollment on First Day of Stanford 9 Testing and Apportionment Information Reports to CDE
Beginning July 15, depending on district testing window	Districts receive score reports
Within 20 working days after district receives reports	Districts distribute STAR Student Performance Reports to parents/guardians
Within 5 days after district receives report of results	Districts submit receipt of complete and accurate reports to CDE
August 29	Preliminary STAR results for schools, districts, counties, and the state posted on the Internet (will include only schools and districts that completed testing and submitted tests for scoring by June 28, 2002)
September 27	Second Internet posting to include schools and districts that completed testing by August 2
November 15	Final Internet posting



Internet Posting of 2002 STAR Test Results

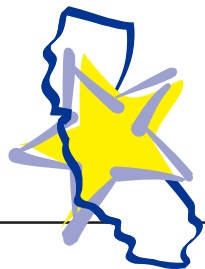
The Internet report will:

- be accessed through the California Department of Education address (<http://www.cde.ca.gov>) or (<http://star.cde.ca.gov>) for STAR Test Results
- allow search for results by county, district, school name, or zip code
- display the California Standards Tests and the Stanford 9 results by grade level and content area for the state, counties, districts, and schools for all students
- include results for California Standards Tests and Stanford 9 for all students who are English only and fluent-English proficient, for all English learners, for English learners enrolled in California public schools less than 12 months, and for English learners enrolled in California public schools 12 months or more; for males and females; for students who are economically disadvantaged; for students who are not economically disadvantaged; for students receiving special education services; and for students not receiving special education services.
- include the California Standards Test scores for
 - English-language arts and mathematics for grades 2 through 11
 - science and history-social science for grades 9 through 11
 - mean scaled scores and percent of students scoring at each performance level
 - performance levels not yet set for coordinated/integrated science tests
- include Stanford 9 scores for
 - total reading, written expression (language), spelling, and total mathematics for grades 2 through 8
 - total reading, writing (language), total mathematics, science, and history-social science for grades 9 through 11
- include SABE/2 scores for
 - total reading, mathematics, and language for grades 2 through 11
 - spelling for grades 2 through 8



Facts about the 2002 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

- The Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program was originally authorized through Senate Bill 376 in 1997 and was reauthorized through Senate Bill 233 in 2001.
- STAR requires that all California public school students in grades 2 through 11 take a standardized achievement test in English each spring to measure achievement in basic academic skills.
- The law requires that students in grades 2 through 8 be tested in reading, writing, spelling, and mathematics. Students in grades 9 through 11 are to be tested in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and history-social science (A complete listing of the STAR tests given in 2002 in all grade levels is outlined on page 17).
- All STAR test questions are reviewed by the Statewide Pupil Assessment Review Panel to ensure that questions do not ask students to reveal personal or family beliefs. Panel members are appointed by the Governor, the Legislature, and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. A majority of the panel consists of parents whose children attend California public schools.
- In spring 2002, the STAR Program featured three components, designated by the State Board of Education:
 - California Standards Tests, produced for California public schools
 - Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition, Form T (Stanford 9), published by Harcourt Educational Measurement
 - Spanish Assessment of Basic Education, Second Edition (SABE/2), published by CTB/McGraw-Hill
- In addition to the tests given in English, Spanish-speaking English learners who had been enrolled in California public schools for fewer than 12 months took the SABE/2, published by CTB/McGraw-Hill. Primary language testing is a district option for students enrolled more than 12 months prior to testing.



Facts about the 2002 California Standards Test

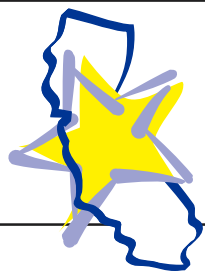
The California Standards Tests are given to public school students in grades 2 through 11 as part of the state's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. Enacted into law in 1997, the STAR Program has two components in addition to the California Standards Tests: the Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition, Form T, (Stanford 9) and the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education, Second Edition (SABE/2).

A Test for California Schools

- The California Standards Tests, developed specifically for California public schools, are aligned to state-adopted standards that describe what students should know and be able to do in each grade and subject tested.
- The California Standards Tests in English-language arts and mathematics for grades 2 through 11 became part of the STAR Program in 1999. Standards Tests in history-social science and science for grades 9 through 11 were added in 2001. Writing tests for grades 4 and 7, requiring students to write an essay in response to an assigned task, also were added in 2001.
- Standards Tests for 2002 STAR included questions from the Stanford 9 English-language arts tests for grades 2 through 11 and mathematics tests for grades 2 through 7, that are aligned to state-adopted academic content standards, and additional test questions that address the standards. The number of items used from the Stanford 9 for the Standards Tests vary by grade level and subject area.

Test Content and Format

- Standards Tests in English-language arts in grades 2 through 11; in mathematics in grades 2 through 7; and in history-social science in grades 9, 10, and 11 are tied to specific grade levels.
- The Mathematics Standards Tests in grades 8 through 11 were tied to specific math courses. A High School Summative Mathematics Standards Test was given to students in grades 9–11 who completed algebra II or third-year integrated math at any time before testing began. A General Mathematics Standards Test was given to students in grades 8 and 9 who either were not yet taking algebra I or were in the first year of a two year algebra I course. The General Mathematics Standards Test assessed academic content standards for grades 6 and 7.
- Students in grades 9, 10, and 11 took Science Standards Tests that also are tied to specific courses rather than grade levels. Only students who completed a standards-based science course took a California Standards Test.
- Questions for all standards tests, except for the writing tests in grades 4 and 7, were in a multiple-choice format.
- Student responses to the writing tasks were scored using 4-point scoring guides that are aligned to state-adopted academic content standards for writing strategies, applications, and conventions.



Facts about the 2002 California Standards Test

Performance Level Reporting

- The California Standards Tests are criterion-referenced tests. Results are based on how well students achieve identified state-adopted academic content standards, not how student results compare with results of other students taking the same tests.
- The State Board of Education approved five performance levels for reporting results of the California Standards Tests. The performance levels designated are advanced, proficient, basic, below basic, and far below basic.
- Initial recommendations came from Performance Level Setting Panels for each content area, convened in summer 2000 and 2001. The SBE also scheduled regional hearings to receive public input before final performance levels were adopted in February 2001 for English-language arts and November 2001 for mathematics, history-social science, and science.
- The SBE adopted performance standards for the General Mathematics and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Year Integrated Mathematics Tests during March 2002. The scaled scores for the California Standards Tests range from 100 to 450. The tests for each grade level and content area are scaled independently. This means that scores only may be compared for the same grade level and content area. For example, the percentage of students scoring at each performance level on the English-Language Arts Test in grade 2 may be compared

between and among schools, districts, and the state for a given year or may be compared from year-to-year. However, the grade 2 results should not be compared with grade 3, and English-language arts should not be compared with mathematics. For all tests and content areas, the lowest scaled score for basic is 300, and the lowest scaled score for proficient is 350.

Reporting 2002 Results

- Individual student and group results of the 2002 administration of the California Standards Tests are being reported using scaled scores and performance levels.
- The performance levels used to report 2002 results are: (see charts on pages 7, 8, and 9)
 - advanced
 - proficient
 - basic
 - below basic
 - far below basic
- The performance levels describe student achievement with respect to California Academic Content Standards.
- The scaled scores are specific to each grade and content areas. They are designed to serve the needs of California's accountability system, allowing for accurate comparisons of scores in the same content area and grade level from year-to-year.



Reporting 2002 STAR Test Results

Reporting 2001 STAR Results Press Briefing Packet—Part I

Questions and Answers for the Media

What STAR tests were given in 2002?

For the fifth year, students in grades 2 through 11 were tested with the Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition, Form T (Stanford 9), published by Harcourt Education Measurement. For the fourth year, students also were given the California Standards Tests in English-language arts and mathematics. Standards Tests in history-social science and science in grades 9 through 11, and a writing test in grades 4 and 7 were given for the second time. The Spanish Assessment of Basic Education, Second Edition (SABE/2), published by CTB/McGraw-Hill, was given to Spanish speaking English learners (See page 14 for a complete listing of the STAR tests given in each grade).

What was included in the California Standards Tests?

The California Standards Tests for English-language arts and mathematics in grades 2 through 7 included questions from the Stanford 9 that are aligned to state-adopted academic content standards and additional test questions that address the standards (See pages 5 through 9 for Facts about the 2002 California Standards Tests). The California Standards Tests for history-social science, science, and mathematics in grades 8 through 11 included no Stanford 9 items.

What students were required to take the California Standards Tests and the Stanford 9?

All students enrolled in grades 2–11 in California public schools on the day testing begins were required to take these tests. This included English learners, regardless of the length of time they have been in California schools or their fluency in English, and students with disabilities who receive special education services. Parents could submit written requests to have their children exempted from any part or all of the tests. Only students with written parent requests were exempted from the tests.

What students were required to take SABE/2?

In addition to taking the designated STAR tests in English, Spanish-speaking English learners who have been enrolled in California public schools less than 12 months were required to take the SABE/2. This part of the STAR Program was optional if the students had been enrolled in California public schools 12 months or more.

When will 2002 STAR test results be released to the public?

The public release of 2002 STAR test results for schools, districts, counties, and the state for all students is scheduled to be posted on the California Department of Education Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov> on August 29, 2002. Subgroup results are scheduled for posting at that time. Individual student, school, and district reports are sent to districts as results are completed. Districts must distribute individual student reports to parents within 20 working days of district receipt of the reports.

Will individual student results be posted on the Internet?

No. STAR results for individual students are confidential and can be reviewed only by the teacher, the parent or guardian, and the student. Also to protect privacy, no results for any group with fewer than 10 students will be posted on the Internet.

How can media representatives get the STAR results?

The only direct source for the 2002 STAR results is the Internet report. Files can be downloaded; instructions for downloading are included in this packet. Data disk files will not be available.

What reports will be on the Internet?

The Internet reports will include 2002 results by grade level for schools, districts, counties, and the state. Results will be reported for the California Standards Tests, the Stanford 9, and the SABE/2. The Standards Tests, Stanford 9, and SABE/2 results will be reported for 11 groups for:

- All students (not applicable for SABE/2)
- English learners
- English learners enrolled for fewer than 12 months
- English learners enrolled for 12 months or more
- English only and Fluent English proficient students (not applicable for SABE/2)
- Female students
- Male students
- Economically disadvantaged students
- Non-economically disadvantaged students
- Students receiving special education services
- Students not receiving special education services





Reporting 2002 STAR Test Results

Reporting 2001 STAR Results Press Briefing Packet—Part I

Questions and Answers for the Media

How will the results for the Grade 4 and 7 California Writing Standards Tests be reported?

The scores for the writing section of the Grade 4 and 7 California English-Language Arts Standards Tests were added to the multiple-choice scores for each student to calculate the California English-Language Arts Standards Test scaled scores and to assign each score to a performance level. There is no separate reporting for the writing section of the test.

Are there any changes in the scores and reports that schools and parents/guardians are receiving?

The STAR Parent Report was completely revised for 2002 and now is called the STAR Performance Report. This new two-page report includes the student's scaled score and performance level for each of the California Standards Tests, the number correct out of the number possible component score for the California Standards Tests, the Stanford 9 number correct and national percentile scores, and the California Reading List Number. The back of the report discusses California's Academic Content Standards and provides information about what students are expected to know and be able to do at selected grade levels.

How are the California Standards Test results reported?

The scores for the California Standards Tests are average scaled scores and the percent of students who scored at each performance level (i.e., advanced, proficient, basic, below basic, and far below basic). The results for coordinated/integrated science are reported as the average number correct out of the number possible, because the SBE has not yet adopted performance standards for those tests.

What is a percentile rank?

The percentile rank is the percentage of students in the norming sample that had scores less than or equal to a student's score. A student with a reading score at the 60th percentile scored equal to or better than 60 percent of the students in the norming sample. The Stanford 9 is a nationally normed test, which means that the norm group was representative of students across the nation tested in the same grade at approximately the same time of the school year in 1995. Thus, scores reported for the Stanford 9 are national percentile ranks (NPR). The SABE/2 produces a reference percentile by comparing a student's score to a reference group of Spanish-speaking students in bilingual classes.

What is the national percentile rank (NPR) of the "average" student?

The mean percentile rank for a particular group of students (e.g., all second graders at a particular school) cannot be calculated directly because percentile ranks cannot be averaged across students. To estimate a percentile rank for a group of students, a score that can be averaged (e.g., the scaled score or the normal curve equivalent [NCE] score) must be used. Every scaled score or NCE score has an associated percentile rank. For example an NCE score of 40 translates to a percentile rank of 32. For the Stanford 9, the average NCE score for a group of students is calculated. Next, this average score is translated into its associated percentile rank. This "group" percentile rank roughly translates as the national percentile rank (NPR) of the "average" student.

What do the "percent scoring above the 75th NPR, at or above the 50th NPR, and above the 25th NPR" represent?

On the Internet report, there are three cut points used to create school, district, county, and state Stanford 9 scores, the 25th, 50th, and 75th national percentiles. The percent of students scoring above cut points is calculated by counting the number of students scoring at or above a particular cut point (i.e., 50th percentile) or above a particular cut point (i.e., 25th percentile and the 75th percentile), dividing by the total number of scores, and converting to a percentage. For example, a student scoring at the 67th percentile would count as scoring at or above the 50th percentile. A student scoring at the 40th percentile would not. The percent scoring at or above the 50th percentile is the percent of students in a school, district, county, or state whose scores would place them in the top half of the national distribution. This is also the percentage of students generally identified as scoring at or above grade level.

What is the mean scaled score?

The "scaled score" on the Stanford 9 refers to a particular type of scale called an equal interval scale. An interval scale is developed for achievement tests to provide a more precise measurement of student achievement. A one-point change on one part of the scale is equivalent to a one-point change on another part of the scale and can be averaged. Raw scores, which are the same as the number of items answered correctly, do not provide this precision because not all items are equal. Items differ in a number of ways, one of which is difficulty. To provide a more precise measure of what students know, the Stanford 9 has developed an interval scale that takes into account item difficulty. The Stanford 9 provides scaled scores for individual students and mean or average scaled scores for groups of students.



Reporting 2002 STAR Test Results

Reporting 2001 STAR Results Press Briefing Packet—Part I

Questions and Answers for the Media

Can media representatives see the tests that were administered?

No. The test questions can be seen only by students when they take the test and by legislators and school board members under special circumstances. These security precautions ensure that the tests are fair for all students and that test questions can be used for more than one year.

What if parents did not want their students tested?

Education Code section 60615 provides that, “Not withstanding any other provision of law, a parent’s or guardian’s written request to school officials to excuse his or her child from any or all parts of the assessment administered pursuant to this chapter shall be granted.”

Is the California Reading List Number on the 2002 STAR Performance Reports?

Yes. For the third year, the California Reading List Number directs students, parents/guardians, and teachers to a list of state-recommended books that are at a student’s reading level, as indicated by the Stanford 9 reading comprehension score. The Reading List Numbers range from 1–13+. The approved reading list is posted at <http://star.cde.ca.gov> on the Internet.

How similar are the norming groups to California’s students for Stanford 9 and SABE/2?

The Stanford 9 is a nationally normed test, which means that the norming sample was representative of the nation, but not necessarily of the state. The composition of the Stanford 9 norming sample is shown in the table on the right. The reference norming group for the SABE/2 was composed of Spanish speaking students in bilingual programs from 142 schools in 12 states with large Spanish speaking populations, including California.

What was done to help students in special education?

Most students in special education were administered the tests under standard conditions with all other students. Certain accommodations and adaptations, such as additional time, Braille, large print tests, revised test directions, out-of-level tests, or use of classroom aides and/or aides, were provided for special education students who needed assistance. The accommodations used had to be based on explicit statements in each student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan.

How final are the Internet results?

The statewide results posted on the Internet on August 29 are preliminary and do not include results for approximately 30,000 students. Districts have not yet verified all school and district results, so they also are preliminary. Reporting errors typically are not found until districts start reviewing the data. Most districts will not have had time for a complete review process. Revisions in these results are expected to be made throughout the summer and fall with the final 2002 results posted during mid to late November.

Can Stanford 9 scores for schools or districts from 2001 testing be compared to 2002 results?

Yes. Results for both years are available on the Internet. To compare scores from the two years, subtract last year’s score from this year’s score; however, it is important to choose the correct score to use for this purpose. The score that can best be used is the percent of students scoring at or above the 50th NPR. For example, if last year’s score for a school in fourth grade reading was 40% of students scoring at or above the 50th NPR and this year’s score was 43% scoring at or above the 50th NPR, then an improvement of three percentage points occurred. In other words, if the school tested 100 fourth graders, then 3 more students scored at or above the 50th NPR in reading this year as compared to 2001. It is inappropriate to use the NPR for the “average” student to make this comparison.



Reporting 2002 STAR Test Results

Reporting 2001 STAR Results Press Briefing Packet—Part I

Questions and Answers for the Media

Demographic Characteristics

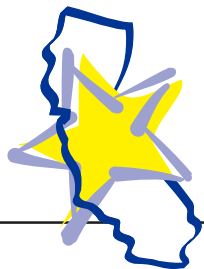
	Norming Sample Stanford 9	California Students
Geographic Region		
Northeast	22.4	
Midwest	21.0	
South	25.0	
West	31.6	
SES Status		
Low	28.8	
Middle	33.9	
High	37.3	
Urbanicity		
Urban	24.3	38.1
Suburban	46.8	42.7
Rural	28.9	16.9
Ethnicity (85.6% Reporting)		
African American	16.9	8.8
Hispanic	9.6	40.5
White	63.2	38.8
Other	10.1	
American Indian or Alaskan Native		.9
Asian		8.1
Pacific Islander		.6
Filipino		2.4
Handicapping Condition		
Emotionally Disturbed	0.3	0.4
Learning Disabled	2.3	6.9
Mentally Handicapped	0.1	0.4
Hearing Impaired	0.2	0.2
Visually Impaired	0.1	0.1
Orthopedically Impaired	0.1	0.2
Limited English Proficiency	1.8	24.6
Other	0.6	2.5
Nonpublic Schools		
Catholic	4.4	5.1
Private	8.7	4.2



STAR Tests Students Took in 2002

Grades	Students To Be Tested	Required Tests
2-7	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stanford 9 Reading Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, Math Problem Solving, Math Procedures, Language, and Spelling (Word Study Skills for Grade 2) ■ California English-Language Arts Standards Tests ■ California Mathematics Standards Tests
4 & 7	All (plus students in other grades taking the grade 4 or 7 California English-Language Arts Standards Tests)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ California Standards Writing Test
8	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stanford 9 Reading Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, Math Problem Solving, Math Procedures, Language, and Spelling ■ California English-Language Arts Standards Tests ■ California General Mathematics, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or 1st, 2nd or 3rd Year Integrated Mathematics Standards Test
9	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stanford 9 Reading Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, Math, Language, Science, and Social Studies ■ California English-Language Arts Standards Tests ■ California General Mathematics, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, 1st, 2nd or 3rd Year Integrated or High School Mathematics Standards Test ■ California Grade-9 History-Social Science Standards Test
10 & 11	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stanford 9 Reading Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, Math, Language, Science and Social Studies ■ California English-Language Arts Standards Tests ■ California History-Social Science Standards Test
10 & 11	Selected Students Based on Highest Level Mathematics Course Completed between 2001 Summer School and End of 2001-02 School Year*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, 1st, 2nd or 3rd Year Integrated or High School Mathematics Standards Test
9-11	Selected Students Based on Highest Level Science Course Completed between 2001 Summer School and End of 2001-02 School Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics or one of four integrated/coordinated science tests, Earth/Biology/Chemistry, Earth/Biology/Physics, Earth/Chemistry/Physics, or Biology/Chemistry/Physics

* Students in grades 9-11 took the California Mathematics Standards Test for the highest course they completed between the 2001 summer school and the end of the 2001-02 school year. Students in grades 9-11 who completed Algebra II or 3rd Year Integrated Math or an equivalent or higher math course any time prior to the 2002 STAR test administration, including during a previous grade, took the California High School Mathematics Standards Test.



Facts about the 2003 STAR Program

Questions and Answers for the Media

What is new for the 2003 STAR Program?

The STAR Program will continue to include three components:

- The California Standards Tests, based on state academic content standards for all subject areas tested
- A norm-referenced test (NRT) to provide national comparisons of results
- An achievement test in Spanish

Educational Testing Service (ETS) will be the contractor for the tests given in English.

- The *California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey* (CAT/6 Survey), is published by CTB/McGraw-Hill. The following CAT/6 survey tests will be administered beginning in spring 2003—reading/language and mathematics (grades 2–11) spelling (grades 2–8), and science (grades 9–11). The CAT/6 replaces the Stanford 9.
- Stand-alone California English-language arts standards tests in grades 2–11. Stand-alone mathematics standards tests in grade 2–7. The term “standalone” is used to indicate that these tests will include only items written specifically for California. No norm-referenced CAT/6 items will be used to produce the standards-based scores.

Will changing contractors interrupt the continuity of the STAR Program?

No. There will be little or no disruption to the program’s continuity. The STAR Program is a state testing program that is closely monitored by the CDE. The new contractor will be working under a defined scope of work developed by the CDE and approved by the SBE.

How will the changes in testing contractors help achieve the State Superintendent’s goal to improve the California Standards Tests?

The new contractor, ETS, is internationally recognized as a leader in developing quality high-stakes testing programs. The increasing quality of the California Standards Tests is a

top priority. These tests have been designated as the core of California’s Assessment System, and other California tests are being linked to them.

Can districts expect the same level of service from ETS that has been provided for the past five years?

Yes. The provision of services to districts is included in the contractor’s scope of work; therefore, it is expected that the new contractor will provide districts with comparable service.

Will the test items on the NRT and the CSTs change?

Yes. The norm-referenced test items and format will change, since the NRT for 2003 will be different tests. The NRT will continue with multiple-choice questions. Half of the items for the California Standards Tests already are replaced each year.

Will a new contractor change the testing procedures for schools and districts?

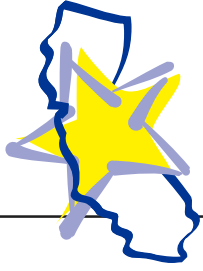
There may be some minor changes, but the testing procedures are established by the state through the contractor’s scope of work. It is not the intent of the CDE to make significant changes in the testing procedures.

Will year-to-year comparisons be possible between the Stanford 9 and the CAT/6?

Yes. Results of the CAT/6 will be equated with Stanford 9 results to make year-to-year comparisons possible. The scoring of the NRT and the CSTs still will be managed by National Computer System (NCS), the company that has overseen this part of the program for the past five years.

Will the Academic Performance Index (API) for California public schools be affected by the new NRT?

Not significantly. API calculations have been evolving over time as the STAR Program has evolved. The majority of the 2002 base API weight will be based on the California Standards Tests (CSTs), not the NRT. This growing emphasis on the CSTs will continue.



Facts about the 2003 STAR Program

Questions and Answers for the Media

Districts/schools have been modifying instruction to align with STAR Program expectations. Will this work be negatively affected with the change in testing contractors?

No. The STAR Program is focused on assessing students' achievement level on the California Academic Content Standards. Textbooks approved for kindergarten through grade 8, California curriculum frameworks, and the California Standards Tests are all tied to these standards. If schools and districts have aligned grade and course content with the academic content standards, they should see improvement in student scores on the California Standards Tests.

Will testing procedures and accommodations change for English learners and/or students with IEPs or 504 plans?

Yes, but these changes are not the result of a new contractor. The CDE will be recommending changes in the Title 5 Regulations and SBE policies related to accommodations to ensure compliance with new federal requirements in "No Child Left Behind."

Will the performance levels for CST results change with the new contractor?

No. The current performance levels for the CSTs will not be changed unless the SBE directs that a change should occur.



California Writing Standards Tests: Grades 4 and 7

During spring 2002, students in grades 4 and 7 and students in other grades taking STAR tests for grades 4 and 7 were administered California Writing Standards Tests in addition to taking a 90-question English-language arts standards tests. (50 reading questions and 40 writing questions).

The writing tests are based on writing standards for grades 4 and 7 that are part of the California English-language arts Academic Content Standards.* These standards become increasingly more difficult as students move through the grades. In grade 4, students are expected to write narratives, responses to literature, and summaries of information. In grade 7, students are expected to write fictional or autobiographical narratives, persuasive essays, responses to literature, and summaries of information. Students in both grades also are expected to write research reports, but this standard cannot be measured with a short, standardized test.

Students worked independently on the writing test for one hour. During that time, they read the test directions and the written prompt, planned their writing, and wrote an essay. Students in grades 4 were required to write a narrative for an assigned topic that had a thoroughly developed sequence of significant ideas and included descriptive language.

Students in grade 7 were required to write a persuasive letter or essay in which they defended a position with relevant evidence and convincingly addressed the opposing view. Sample writing assignments and student work are in the Grade 4/7 Writing Guide posted on the CDE Web site at <www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/star>.

Two people read each student essay to prepare the writing test score. Each reader gave the paper a score of 1, 2, 3, or 4, with 4 being the highest. The student's reported score was the sum of the two readers' scores. If the two readers assigned scores that differed by more than one point, a third person read the paper. If a student essay could not be scored, the score was reported as invalid. An invalid score means that the paper was illegible, blank, written in a language other than English, or the writing did not address the assigned task. The maximum score for the writing portion of the test is 8 points and is reported as the writing application component of the English-Language Arts Standards Test score.

Students at each grade level learn several different types of writing. This writing test provided only a snapshot of student's writing skills.

* A complete listing of the standards are available at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/board/> on the Internet.



California Standards Test Scoring Rubric

Grade 4 Writing Tasks

4 The writing—

- *clearly* addresses all parts of the writing task.
- demonstrates a *clear* understanding of purpose.
- maintains a *consistent* point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate.
- includes a *clearly presented* central idea with *relevant* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes a *variety* of sentence types.
- contains *few, if any, errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do **not** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Narrative writing—

- provides a *thoroughly developed* sequence of *significant* events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- includes *vivid* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to visualize the events or experiences.

3 The writing—

- addresses all parts of the writing task.
- demonstrates a *general* understanding of purpose.
- maintains a *mostly consistent* point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate.
- presents a central idea with *mostly* relevant facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes a *variety* of sentence types.
- contains *some errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do **not** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Narrative writing—

- provides an *adequately developed* sequence of significant events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- includes *some* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to visualize the events or experiences.

2 The writing—

- addresses *only parts* of the writing task.
- demonstrates *little* understanding of purpose.
- maintains an *inconsistent* point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure.
- *suggests* a central idea with *limited* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes *little* variety in sentence types.
- contains *several errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors **may** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Narrative writing—

- provides a *minimally developed* sequence of events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- includes *limited* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to visualize the events or experiences.

1 The writing—

- addresses *only one part* of the writing task.
- demonstrates *no* understanding of purpose.
- *lacks* a clear point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure.
- *lacks* a central idea but may contain *marginally related* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes *no* sentence variety.
- contains *serious errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Narrative writing—

- *lacks* a sequence of events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- *lacks* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to visualize the events or experiences.



California Standards Test Scoring Rubric

Grade 7 Writing Tasks

4 The writing—

- *clearly* addresses all parts of the writing task.
- demonstrates a *clear* understanding of purpose and audience.
- maintains a *consistent* point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including the *effective* use of transitions.
- includes a *clearly presented* central idea with *relevant* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes a *variety* of sentence types.
- contains *few, if any, errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do **not** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Persuasive writing—

- *authoritatively* defends a position with precise and relevant evidence and *convincingly* addresses the reader's concerns, biases, and expectations.

3 The writing—

- addresses all parts of the writing task.
- demonstrates a *general* understanding of purpose and audience.
- maintains a *mostly consistent* point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including the *effective* use of some transitions.
- presents a central idea with *mostly relevant* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes a *variety* of sentence types.
- contains *some errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do **not** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Persuasive writing—

- *generally* defends a position with relevant evidence and addresses the reader's concerns, biases, and expectations.

2 The writing—

- addresses *only parts* of the writing task.
- demonstrates *little* understanding of purpose and audience.
- maintains an *inconsistent* point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure, which may include *ineffective or awkward* transitions that do not unify important ideas.
- *suggests* a central idea with *limited* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes *little* variety in sentence types.
- contains *several errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors **may** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Persuasive writing—

- defends a position with *little, if any*, evidence and *may* address the reader's concerns, biases, and expectations.

1 The writing—

- addresses *only one part* of the writing task.
- demonstrates *no* understanding of purpose and audience.
- *lacks* a point of view, focus, organizational structure, and transitions that unify important ideas.
- *lacks* a central idea but may contain *marginally related* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- includes *no* sentence variety.
- contains *serious errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Persuasive writing—

- *fails* to defend a position with *any* evidence and *fails* to address the reader's concerns, biases, and expectations.